

MBL

October 7, 1954

Dr. Philip B. Armstrong  
Marine Biological Laboratory  
766 Irving Avenue  
Syracuse 10, N.Y.

Dear Dr. Armstrong:

I am happy to reply to your letter of September 29.

The answers to items 1-4 are already indicated.

For 5 and 6, I must reply that my work at the MBL last summer was exclusively in the library, largely in connection with a prospective book in my specialty, the genetics of microorganisms. I had a subsidy from the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, through the Research Committee of the Graduate School, but this subsidy is ordinarily used in support of a graduate student for course work and summer research.

While it would be feasible, and for some aspects advantageous, to transplant my laboratory research to Woods Hole during some summers, the chief advantages of the MBL are not the laboratory and library facilities but the opportunity, so unique these days, of unhurried discourse with colleagues in related, and even distant fields. These contacts ought to be preserved; there are any number of special laboratories throughout the country to get a job of research done, and it is doubtful whether there is any longer a remarkable emphasis or interest in the marine biological research for which Woods Hole is particularly suited. But the locale, by providing such excellent teaching material to begin with, and the lab. facilities are the means of tying together the unique scientific community. I would say, however, that the community was the most important asset.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics